

Ten Questions with....

Rec. Director Gordon Cushing

By JOSH CUTLER

Gordon Cushing has served as Duxbury's recreation director for 18 years. Before that he was a history teacher at Duxbury High School. He also coaches the DHS men's basketball team.

1) What does the future hold for the North Hill golf course? The contract with Johnson Golf Management is up at the end of next year; Dec. 31, 2008. We're in the 10th year of a 10-year deal. ... We are in the process, the North Hill Advisory Committee and myself, of investigating our options. There could be lots of different things. We could go for another 10-year contract, maybe build a driving range or a practice facility. We could go for a shorter three-year deal. We could bring it in



Rec. Director Gordon Cushing answers a few questions.

house and have a department of golf totally run by the town. I'm not saying one way or another which one we should do because we are still really looking at it....Right now we are literally driving from course to course investigating what they do; looking at budgets, getting every bit of information we can from people to bring all that in and study it. We are planning to go to Selectmen with our recommendations sometime in September or October.

2) In the past there have been a few gripes about the management of North Hill. What's your take? I think personally as the rec. director they have done an outstanding job managing the facility. Physically the facility is in excellent shape. The golf course is in great condition. Yes, I do think, I wouldn't hide it, there's been some concerns sometimes about customer service issues. But some of those issues also have to do with changes that were made over the years that are allowed in the contract. Sometimes people have some difficulty with change. I respect the company. I would assume and hope that they would bid on it. They have a history of providing the town with top revenue dollars when they bid.

3) What's the toughest hole at North Hill? As far as handicap goes the third hole is the number one rated stroke hole. Honestly, I think if you talk to people up there they'd say it's number two. It is a long par four and if you make a mistake to the left you are gone.

4) You've worked under several town managers during your tenure. Who's a better athlete Rocco Longo or Richard MacDonald? This is going to get me in trouble. I'd say Rocco is a better athlete, but Richard is a better golfer. Rocco was a terrible golfer. I can talk to both of them and kid around. They have both been really supportive of us.

5) What's changed since you graduated from DHS in 1980? The biggest change is technology. We didn't have

iPods, computers. There were no cell phones, no MySpace; those things just weren't issues. When we needed to get around we thumbed; we just hitchhiked. Not that I would want my kids hitchhiking now. Things have changed. ... Overall the athletes are better now. But I still think Duxbury had great athletes even back then. The difference is now the program is better — many, many different sports excel, whereas back then it was just one or two sports. On the negative side, this will probably get me in trouble, too, but it is what it is. Parents are much more difficult to deal with now than they have been in the past.

6) What advice would you give parents about kids? Let kids be kids and try not to overschedule them.

7) The Percy Walker Pool needs some work. What's the plan? The town commissioned a \$15,000 study in 2006. That study is basically complete. In a month or so the architect will present the study to Selectmen. The first question is what would it take money-wise to get the building back up to snuff. It is a 32-year-old municipal pool. It does need some updates and there are some things that need total replacement. The

second tier of that is like a wish list. What do we need to really make it a great facility? Things like separate showers, family changing rooms, birthday party room, etc.... \$600,000 to \$1 million to get the building up to snuff. About \$2 million total to do all the amenities. Those are not hard and fast numbers. The next step is to get money for plans. Of course it is up to the Selectmen and town manager.

8) Since taking over coaching duties for the DHS boys' basketball team you've had quite a bit of success. What's your secret? Good players make good coaches, as I have said many times before. You don't win state titles without really good players. People like the Magnarellis, Sheas, Herricks...there's a long line of them.

9) What's the worst part of the job? Night meetings. I hate 'em.

10) What does a recreation director do for recreation? I love to fish. We have a 20-foot boat on a mooring in Duxbury Bay. I fish mostly for stripers and flounder. In fact, tomorrow I have the day off and I'm going fishing with my brother. I'm also a big sports fan. I like to go to Red Sox and Patriots games. I also try to travel once a year to go see a college football game. I go to different parts of the country. I've been to games at Arizona State, Florida State and others.